

found that I could get things done, first on the town council and then as a State representative.

I came to Congress with a desire to make a difference for people, to help solve their problems, fight for affordable quality healthcare, ensure education that addresses the needs of every child, work across the aisle for better jobs and better pay for Americans, and keep us all safe and free.

Yet I arrived in Congress in the aftermath of the terrible shootings of 20 6- and 7-year-old children and six educators in the town of Newtown in my district, 6 years ago this coming Friday. My task immediately became how to truly care for and represent those families and be an effective voice for taking action to prevent gun violence. At the time, I did not even know how to find the elevator to get to my attic office in the Cannon House Office Building.

John Dingell, the longest serving Member of Congress, took me under his wing and helped me navigate these Halls. He gave me invaluable advice. He said:

Elizabeth, always remember this: What you do is very important. But you are not important.

He also told me:

It is your job to know your district and vote your district.

How right he was. I learned my district. My team and I worked with others to get lots of legislation passed to help veterans and their families, to support STEM education for women, girls, and children of color; to modernize and upgrade our infrastructure; and to fight the scourge of opioid addiction. We helped thousands of individuals at home cut through red tape and get much-needed support. By working with people, we were able to help government work for people.

Here are some things that I have learned:

The American people are good, great, and eager to see our democracy work better;

Sharing credit is not only the right thing to do, but it works;

If you listen to others, if you look for and build on common ground, you can get things done even with people with whom you disagree on many issues.

The first step is often the hardest. In politics, Mr. Speaker, you need to earn support. You are not entitled to it. You will fail sometimes. You will not meet your own high expectations. You will disappoint people. You will lose an election, but you get up the next day and you try harder.

If there is nothing you would be willing to lose an election over, you shouldn't run for office. Democracy needs people who are prepared to lose their job to make a difference.

Democracy is not about perfection. Democracy is about doing your best every day and bringing out the best in others; and when we fail—which we will—we should not give up. We should get right back to work.

Mr. Speaker, you shouldn't run because you know you will win; you should run because there are things worth fighting for.

If we remember our common values rather than call into question each other's integrity, there is much we can do together. Democracy is something we do; it is not something we tweet about.

Democracy is hard. It is not a spectator sport. You don't need permission in this great country. Democracy gives us—each and every one of us—the opportunity and the right to run, to serve, and to make a difference.

American democracy is a great thing, but it requires us to pitch in and to do our part. We have the opportunity—and in these challenging times for our Nation and the world, I believe we have an obligation—to get involved.

I want to thank my amazing family for their love, their support, and their sacrifices over more than a dozen years of elected office. I thank the voters who entrusted me to work on their behalf. I thank my excellent staff who have worked so hard and ably. I thank the many colleagues who generously guided me and worked with me on issues of common concern for the American people.

In closing, John Dingell's words return to me:

If you ever look up at the Capitol Dome at night and it doesn't send shivers down your spine, you don't deserve to be here because you aren't sufficiently in awe of American democracy.

I can say without hesitation that the white of the Capitol Dome gleaming in the night still sends shivers down my spine. It always will, for we are fortunate enough to live in this amazing country where we have the right to choose our leaders, to raise our voices, and, together, to forge a better nation and a better future for all our children.

FARM BILL CONFERENCE REPORT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I proudly signed the farm bill conference committee report because, after years of hard work, we are set to deliver a win for rural America. Quite frankly, it is a win for all Americans who count daily on access to affordable, high-quality, safe food.

We know that farm country is hurting. USDA recently announced that net farm income for this year is dropping by 12 percent to levels we have not seen since 2002. There is hope though. By passing the farm bill conference report, we can give producers and their lenders certainty. They will know what farm policy will be in place for the next 5 years.

We also made modest adjustments to the Marketing Assistance Loan program to help with cash flow after har-

vest and to providing marketing for U.S. commodities.

There are also important enhancements to dairy policy included in the conference report. Building upon investments made to the dairy safety net as part of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018, we are offering new coverage levels for the first 5 million pounds of production, which drastically reduces premiums on certain levels for larger producers.

These are just some of the many updates in the 2018 farm bill that will set our American farmers on a better path for the next 5 years.

The 2018 farm bill strengthens the farm safety net, protects crop insurance, maintains and preserves conservation funding, improves SNAP program integrity and incentivizes work, and, importantly, provides certainty to rural America.

This agreement reached between the House and the Senate strengthens and maintains important programs like the Price Loss Coverage, the Agriculture Risk Coverage, marketing loans, dairy margin coverage, livestock disaster programs, and crop insurance.

As vice chairman of the committee, I know that a lot of work went into building and negotiating a great bill for our farm families. I would like to thank Chairman MIKE CONAWAY and Ranking Member COLLIN PETERSON for their commitment to passing this bill in 2018.

This Congress, I proudly chaired the Nutrition Subcommittee. The House bill included provisions to give many Americans the skills needed to obtain a family-sustaining job.

While this conference report is a compromise, it does include significant incremental victories that will improve the integrity of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP, so it will be more effective for those who truly need it. The Nutrition Subcommittee hosted 21 hearings on SNAP and heard from more than 80 witnesses on how to improve the program and work toward the ultimate goal of ending hunger in America.

Mr. Speaker, make no mistake. The 2018 farm bill makes real improvements to our Nation's largest antihunger program. These provisions will only further enhance the program so it will be there for the most vulnerable among us, the truly needy.

Now, I am hopeful that we can continue this conversation and soon revisit numerous provisions from the House farm bill's nutrition title. Specifically, there is so much more that can be done through SNAP to help more Americans find good-paying, family-sustaining jobs—an ultimate food security. That is the American way.

The farm bill conference report also helps improve our response to natural disasters, including catastrophic wildfires that have ravaged parts of the Nation. To help encourage new markets for domestic forest products, the conference report invests in research

and development specifically for these new wood-based materials.

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We put emphasis on connecting rural America through significant improvements to broadband delivery. We are dedicating funding to rural health projects to help Americans struggling with opioid addictions and other substance abuse disorders.

This is just some of what is included in the conference report. There is much more policy included that provides key wins for producers, rural communities, and American consumers.

I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of this conference report and deliver much-needed certainty to rural America and all Americans who are in need of affordable, high-quality, and safe food.

ABOLISHING BIGOTRY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. AL GREEN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, once again, I rise to stand in the well of the House of Representatives. As a proud American, it is always an honor to stand in the well of the House of Representatives.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak truth to power as well as speak truth about power. The power that I desire to speak truth to is the Speaker of the House, and I want to say something about the Speaker of the House.

Today, I acknowledge the Speaker's righteousness when he made a decision—I am not sure that it is one that he contemplated with any degree of time—but at some point, there was a decision made to allow Articles of Impeachment that I filed to move forward, such that there could at least be a vote to table it or not. He did not interfere with the process. He did not try to change the rules so that there would be no opportunity for a Member to move impeachment forward, to the extent that we did.

I am proud of Speaker RYAN for doing this because, as a result, I hold in my hand what I call the historic 58. Fifty-eight Members of Congress, some of whom were ranking members of full committees, voted to allow this process to move forward. On a second occasion, 66 Members, the historic 66, voted to allow the process to move forward.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. RYAN did not try to circumvent the process. For this, I say that I am grateful. I respect him for not trying to circumvent the process. Mr. Speaker, had he tried to circumvent it, I probably would be standing here saying some words that would not be similar in any way to what I am saying currently.

I am mentioning this because there is a question that has been put to me by many members of the press as to whether or not we will move forward again with impeachment. I am here to say without question, reservation, or

hesitation that we should not allow ourselves to get back to bigotry as usual. There seems to be a desire to avoid the question of bigotry emanating from the Presidency. There seems to be a desire to move on to something else; let's find another way to deal with the problem.

But that is not what the people who suffer from the bigotry have to endure, just the conversations. They have to deal with the actual bigotry, the actual ugliness that is being fostered across the length and breadth of this country as a result of the bigotry. There are people who are suffering.

The culture is changing. Bigotry is real, and people have to deal with it. Because they do, I don't think we should allow bigotry to go unnoticed as it emanates from the Presidency. Because I don't think so, I will make an announcement sometime next week, more than likely, as to whether or not we will have additional Articles of Impeachment brought before the House.

I have never interfered with the Mueller investigation; I don't intend to interfere with it. But I just believe that we ought not allow bigotry to go unnoticed. We ought not try to get to a point in this country where we will allow bigotry to be nothing more than a talking point. It ought to be an action item.

The greatest place to ascertain whether it is an action item is how we as Members of Congress not only talk about it, but how we vote when the issue is given an opportunity to be voted upon.

Mr. Speaker, I assure you that I will make an announcement sometime in the near future as to whether or not there will be another vote on bigotry emanating from the Presidency. I also, again, thank you for not circumventing the process. Republicans had a majority, and you could have done it without a single Democratic vote. You respected the right of individual Members. It is the right of the individual that you have protected under your leadership. I pray that protection will continue.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to refrain from engaging in personalities toward the President.

HONORING CORY FRITZ

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a dedicated public servant and member of my senior staff, Cory Fritz. The Foreign Affairs Committee has benefited greatly from his sound judgment, skill, and passion for the values, including a free press, that have made America strong.

Cory got his start on the Hill writing speeches, advocating stronger U.S. relations with the former captive nations in Europe, for the late Senator Voinovich of Ohio. He later joined the con-

gressional office of then-Minority Leader John Boehner of Ohio. Working for John throughout his speakership, Cory played an important role on a number of foreign policy issues, including efforts to force the administration to step up the fight against ISIS.

Upon John's retirement, it was only fitting that Cory move to the Foreign Affairs Committee. As deputy staff director, Cory has elevated the committee's communications operations and played a key role in shaping strategy and policy.

Cory is one of my most trusted advisers. His counsel helped pave the way for a number of important accomplishments, including the landmark Russia, Iran, and North Korea sanctions enacted in 2017.

Also, I am proud to have inspired him to take special interest in conservation policy, which has long been a priority of mine. With Cory's assistance, I have advanced legislation to combat wildlife trafficking and poaching. We have also advanced legislation to preserve southern Africa's vital Okavango River Basin.

As I leave the House, I thank Cory for his 11 years of service to his home State of Ohio, to this Republic, and also to the Congress. I wish him and his wife, Sarah, all the best as they prepare to welcome their first child in the spring.

PROTECT GOOD FRIDAY PEACE ACCORDS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. COURTNEY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, one of the dominant news stories on both sides of the Atlantic was the announcement by British Prime Minister Theresa May that she was postponing a much-anticipated vote on accepting a preliminary Brexit package that had been negotiated with the European Union. Her decision, unfortunately, continues the turmoil in her own party and Parliament at large about how to implement a referendum that was narrowly passed instructing her government to leave the European Union that the United Kingdom joined 45 years ago, in 1973.

As a Member of the U.S. Congress that is also divided and struggling with its own ability to execute basic functions, I have a great deal of empathy, as I am sure many of my colleagues do, with the frustration that members of Parliament and the British public are feeling today.

Fundamentally, of course, this is a domestic question for Parliament, and it would be presumptuous for elected officials from the outside to weigh in on the agreement's proposals regarding residency, immigration, visa requirements, and how healthcare coverage will be coordinated if and when the U.K. exits the European Union. However, there is one issue, in which myself and many of my colleagues from